

COUNTRY East Germany

REPORT NO.

TOPIC Soviet Troops Entrained in Rathenow

EVALUATION

PLACE OBTAINED

DATE OF CONTENT

DATE OBTAINED

DATE PREPARED 26 February 1953

REFERENCES

PAGES 1 ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE)

REMARKS

A summary of report was previously given in

At about 4 p.m. on 9 February 1953, two troop trains, each consisting of 12 boxcars occupied by troops and about 40 flatcars carrying about 16 x 122-mm guns and an undetermined number of trucks, were seen at the Rathenow railroad station. The trains left at about 6 p.m. At about 6 p.m., a train consisting of 3 boxcars occupied by troops and an undetermined number of flatcars carrying 3 ambulances, about 12 trucks, 2 sedans and 1 jeep was seen at the Nordbahnhof. At 6:15 p.m., a column of at least 60 trucks towing 122-mm field howitzers, 3 trucks without guns and 1 radio truck were seen in the Pionier Kaserne, ready for departure. At 6:30 a.m. on 10 February, units from the Pionier Kaserne were being entrained on two trains at the Nordbahnhof. The equipment of the units included three field kitchens. The trains left at about 10:30 a.m. toward the main station.

of all the entrained vehicles were painted over. At about 6 p.m., the Pionier Kaserne was only partly occupied, while the other installations were occupied as previously. About 250 empty railroad cars were assembled at the main station.¹ At about 9 p.m., about 200 empty railroad cars, including about 40 boxcars, that 30,000 railroad cars had been assembled. Allegedly, no railroad cars were available for civilian freight traffic.²

1. Comment. On 9 and 10 February, at least five shipments, probably all of units of the 18th How Arty Brig (US), were entrained. Another source previously reported that three shipments would be entrained in Rathenow. Although no information is available on the destination of these trains, it is assumed that the units mentioned above were transferred for short-term field exercises.

2. Comment. Although several reports indicated that railroad cars would be made available at various railroad stations in East Germany in early or mid-February 1953, the number of 30,000 cars appears exaggerated and is believed based on rumors. This belief is confirmed by the fact that, according to transportation records, a daily total of 27,000 to 28,000 railroad cars, including civilian as well as military shipments, was loaded in East Germany prior to early February. On the other hand, there is no doubt, that large troop movements, comparable with those during the fall maneuvers in 1952, started on about 9 February.

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